

Quarter 2 Performance Exceptions Report

Audit & Scrutiny Committee Tuesday 28 November 2023

Report of: Head of Policy & Communications

Purpose: For information

Publication status: Open

Wards affected: All

Executive summary:

This is an exception report about the Council's four policy committees' performance and risk management. The aim is to support the Audit & Scrutiny Committee to monitor the Council's performance and delivery of services.

This report supports the Council's priority of: Building a better Council.

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Recommendation to Committee:

To review and note the policy committees' performance exceptions for Quarter 2 2022-2023 and the committee and corporate risks.

Reason for recommendation:

To help the committee monitor performance and risk.

Introduction and background

1. Part of the committee's role is to review and scrutinise the decisions and performance of the Council.
2. The committee receives a performance and risk exception update for each policy committee: Community Services, Planning Policy, Housing and Strategy and Resources.
3. The following performance information has been included on the basis the indicator targets have not been met.

Community Services

4. The most recent Key Performance Indicators report can be found on the [Community Services Committee](#) agenda.
5. The performance indicator for the percentage of roads, footpaths and public open spaces which are the Council's responsibility to maintain, which meet the environment cleanliness standard, is off target by 5% at 90%. The target is 95%.
6. This is a challenging target to meet, as the number of street cleansing operatives has decreased since the target was set. Sickness has impacted service delivery and there are issues with the reliability of the mechanical sweeper. As a short term measure agency staff are being recruited to help provide the service. In the longer term, we are reviewing the level of resources appropriate for the service.

Planning Policy

7. The most recent Key Performance Indicators report can be found on the [Planning Policy Committee](#) agenda.
8. There were no exceptions in the most recent report, with all targets for nationally set planning indicators met.

Housing

9. The most recent Key Performance Indicators can be found on the [Housing Committee](#) agenda.
10. H04: Number of households living in temporary accommodation. This is off target by 29 households at 59 households. The target is 30 households.
11. The increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation reflects the current difficulties in successfully preventing / relieving homelessness and the lack of supply of affordable housing. Q2 performance declined by five households compared to the 55 households living in temporary accommodation in Q1.

12. HO5: People in Urgent Need (Bands A & B) on the Housing Register. This is off target by 208 people at 483 people. The target is 275 people. Q2 has seen an increase of 20 households when compared to Q1, which totalled 463 households in urgent need.
13. This figure remains high due to high demand and a limited supply of affordable housing. The Housing Team continues to work with colleagues to ensure a continued supply of affordable housing is provided throughout the district, as well as pursuing other initiatives, including the Tenants' Incentive Scheme, Assisted Purchase Scheme and relocation strategies within the housing stock.

Strategy and Resources

14. The most recent Key Performance Indicators report can be found on the [Strategy & Resources Committee](#) agenda.
15. Two KPIs did not meet their target for the quarter, SR5 and SR10. The full list is available in Appendix A.
16. SR5: The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness absence (long and short-term) is off target by 1.14 days. This is an improvement since the last quarter. The target is 7.1 days. The overall trend is down, for the same quarter last year sickness absence was 11.8%.
17. SR10: The percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds by Customer Services, was off target by 31.84% at 48.16%. The target is 80%. This was a slight improvement on the previous quarter.
18. While more staff have now been recruited to replace those who have moved to other teams, training new staff takes time and can also impact response rates. This KPI is being reviewed to evaluate if it is fit for purpose. The level of staffing in the team will be kept under review to ensure it remains at an appropriate level.
19. During quarter 2, the average time to answer a call varied from three to five minutes, with a call handling time of under four minutes. Call handling is the actual length of the call. At the end of each call there is a wrap up time allowed for the team to make notes, update cases, send e-mails etc.
20. The abandonment rate varied from just under 20% to 30% and is measured after seven seconds. In most cases callers often abandon calls just before they are likely to be answered. More detail about calls is provided in the table below:

Quarter 2	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023
Number of calls	2989	3113	2780
Number of calls answered	2104	2201	2250
Average speed of answer (mins)	5.32	5.18	3.15
Average delay to abandon (mins)	5.22	5.42	4.53
Average call handling time (mins)	3.19	3.32	3.32
Calls abandoned after seven seconds	885 (30%)	912 (29%)	530 (19%)

Risk headlines

21. The policy committees and [Corporate Risk Register](#) have details of actions taken and being taken to mitigate against risk. Details of current red risks are provided below.

[Planning Policy Committee Risk Register](#)

- P1: Implications of draft Tandridge Local plan 2033 being found unsound by the Inspector.
- P2: Lack of five year housing land supply, including gypsy and traveller land
- P3: Lack of capacity in planning team and issues with IT systems negatively impacts performance and delivery of service, such as determining applications within statutory timeframes and providing governmental statistical returns.

[Housing Committee Risk Register](#)

- H1: Council fails to deliver the target number of properties in the Council House Building Programme, due to poor performance of the contractor, planning delays, unplanned costs, availability of materials and utility providers.

[Community Services Committee Risk Register](#)

- CS3: Delays in monitoring council owned trees and impact of Ash dieback creates greater risk of tree falls.

[Strategy and Resources Risk Register](#)

- There are no red risks.

Key implications

Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The risks identified in the corporate risk registers reported to individual policy committees and their mitigating actions may lead to additional resources and cost implications for the Council if they materialise.

Once identified, the financial impact of any additional cost pressures to reduce risk and / or improve performance will be shown in the monthly budget monitoring reports. Budget monitoring reports will also identify and quantify where possible financial risks to delivering the budget, along with mitigating actions. Ensuring the Council has adequate reserves and contingencies to respond to these risks is a key element of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Comments of the Head of Legal Services

A performance exception report is presented to the committee on a quarterly basis as part of the Council's performance management framework. By working with officers from different service areas in the production of this report the Council embeds accountability for performance within the senior management structure. This allows for a flow of detailed information to and from the Council's leadership.

There is no statutory duty to report regularly to councillors on the Council's performance, but as a best value authority under the Local Government Act 1999, the Council has a statutory duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Regular reporting of performance can assist the Council to demonstrate best value. Analysis is also needed to understand the trend, the history and probable future direction of performance of the Council.

Equality

This report contains no proposals that would disadvantage any particular minority groups.

Climate change

This report contains no proposals that would impact on the Council's commitment to climate change.

Appendices

None

Background papers

None

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